

Integral Geometry of Euler Equations

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Abstract. We develop an integral geometry of stationary Euler equations defining some function w on the Grassmannian of affine lines in \mathbb{R}^3 depending on a putative compactly supported solution $(v; p)$ of the system and deduce some linear differential equations for w . We conjecture that $w = 0$ everywhere and prove that this conjecture implies that $v = 0$.

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1 Introduction

In the present paper we introduce and develop a version of integral geometry for the steady Euler system.

More precisely, the system which we consider is as follows

$$\sum_{j=1}^3 \frac{\partial(v^i v^j)}{\partial x_j} + \frac{\partial p}{\partial x_i} = 0 \quad \text{for } i = 1, 2, 3, \quad (1.1)$$

for an unknown vector field $v = v(x) = (v^1(x), v^2(x), v^3(x))$ and an unknown scalar function $p = p(x)$, $x \in \mathbb{R}^3$; it expresses the conservation of fluid's momentum $v \otimes v + p\delta_{ij}$ and reads in a coordinate free form as follows

$$\operatorname{div}(v \otimes v) + \nabla p = 0. \quad (1.2)$$

Note that if we add to (1.1) the incompressibility condition

$$\operatorname{div} v = 0, \quad (1.3)$$

the system (1.1)–(1.3) describes a steady state flow of the ideal fluid.

A long-standing folklore conjecture states that a smooth compactly supported solution of (1.1)–(1.3) should be identically zero, and this is known for Beltrami flows; see [N] and also [CC]. Let us state it explicitly:

Conjecture 1.1 *Let $(v; p) \in C_0(\mathbb{R}^3)$ be a solution of (1.1)–(1.3). Then $v = 0$, $p = 0$.*

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Note, however, that there do exist nontrivial Beltrami flows slowly decaying at infinity; see [EP]. Note also that nontrivial compactly supported solutions of system (1.1) exist, e.g., any spherically symmetric vector field v is a solution of (1.1) for a suitable pressure p , but we do not know whether the system

$$\sum_{j=1}^3 v^j \frac{\partial v^i}{\partial x_j} + \frac{\partial p}{\partial x_i} = 0, \quad i = 1, 2, 3$$

admits a non-trivial compactly supported solution (not satisfying (1.3)).

Below we characterize the kernel of (1.1) in terms of integral transforms of the quadratic forms $v^i v^j$. More precisely, given any smooth compactly supported solution $(v; p)$ of (1.1), we define a smooth function w on the Grassmannian M classifying lines in space using the X -ray transforms of $v^i v^j$ and then derive a linear differential equation for w . Using a Radon plane transform of w we deduce one more linear homogeneous differential equation which suggests that $w = 0$ everywhere. However, we are not able to deduce this fact and formulate it as a conjecture; we show that assuming the conjecture and (1.3) one can deduce Conjecture 1.1. Therefore, we put forth

Conjecture 1.2. *Let w be the function on the Grassmannian $G_{1,3}$ of affine lines in \mathbb{R}^3 , defined below in section 3, which depends on a compactly supported solution $(v; p)$ of (1.1). Then $w = 0$ everywhere.*

Note, in particular, that this conjecture holds for any spherically symmetric compactly supported vector field v .

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: in Section 2 we recall some definitions and results from [S] concerning the X -ray transform of symmetric tensor fields. In Section 3 we define and study a smooth function $w \in C^\infty(M)$ which depends on a smooth compactly supported solution (v, p) of (1.1). Section 4 contains a description of two invariant order 2 differential operators on $C^\infty(M)$ and a differential equation for w in terms of those operators. In Section 5 we define a plane Radon transform for quadratic tensor fields, prove that it vanishes and explain why this partially confirms Conjecture 1.2. Finally, in Section 6 we deduce Conjecture 1.1 assuming Conjecture 1.2 together with (1.3).

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2 Tensor X -ray Transform

We use throughout our paper the integral geometry of tensor fields developed in [S] and discussed in [NSV] in its three-dimensional form. Let us give some of its points in our simple situation. For details see [S] and [NSV].

In what follows we fix a positive scalar product $\langle x, y \rangle$, $x, y \in \mathbb{R}^n$. Let

$$T\mathbb{S}^{n-1} = \{(x, \xi) \in \mathbb{R}^n \times \mathbb{R}^n : \|\xi\| = 1, \langle x, \xi \rangle = 0\} \subset \mathbb{R}^n \times (\mathbb{R}^n \setminus \{0\})$$

be the tangent bundle of $\mathbb{S}^{n-1} \subset \mathbb{R}^n$.

Given a continuous rank h symmetric tensor field f on \mathbb{R}^n , the *X-ray transform* of f is defined for $(x, \xi) \in \mathbb{R}^n \times (\mathbb{R}^n \setminus \{0\})$ by

$$(If)(x, \xi) = \sum_{i_1, \dots, i_h=1}^n \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} f_{i_1 \dots i_h}(x + t\xi) \xi_{i_1} \dots \xi_{i_h} dt \quad (2.1)$$

under the assumption that f decays at infinity so that the integral converges.

We denote by $\mathcal{S}(S^h; \mathbb{R}^n)$ the space of symmetric degree h tensor fields with all components lying in the Schwartz space, and denote by $\mathcal{S}(T\mathbb{S}^{n-1})$ the Schwartz space on $T\mathbb{S}^{n-1}$. Below we consider only tensors from $\mathcal{S}(S^h; \mathbb{R}^n)$ and functions from $\mathcal{S}(T\mathbb{S}^{n-1})$. For such $f \in \mathcal{S}(S^h; \mathbb{R}^n)$ we get a C^∞ -smooth function $\psi(x, \xi) = (If)(x, \xi)$ on $\mathbb{R}^n \times (\mathbb{R}^n \setminus \{0\})$ satisfying the following conditions:

$$\psi(x, t\xi) = \text{sgn}(t)t^{h-1}\psi(x, \xi) \quad (0 \neq t \in \mathbb{R}), \quad \psi(x + t\xi, \xi) = \psi(x, \xi), \quad (2.2)$$

which mean that $(If)(x, \xi)$ actually depends only on the line passing through the point x in direction ξ , and we parameterize the manifold of oriented lines in \mathbb{R}^n by $T\mathbb{S}^{n-1}$. For $\chi(x, \xi) \in \mathcal{S}(T\mathbb{S}^{n-1})$ we can extend χ by homogeneity, setting $\chi(x, \xi) = \chi(x, \xi/\|\xi\|)$, to the open subset $\mathcal{Q} \cap \{\xi \neq 0\}$ of the quadric

$$\mathcal{Q} = \{(x, \xi) \in \mathbb{R}^n \times \mathbb{R}^n : \langle x, \xi \rangle = 0\} \supset T\mathbb{S}^{n-1}.$$

Conversely, for a tensor field $f \in \mathcal{S}(S^h; \mathbb{R}^n)$, the restriction $\chi = \psi|_{T\mathbb{S}^{n-1}}$ of the function $\psi = If$ to the manifold $T\mathbb{S}^{n-1}$ belongs to $\mathcal{S}(T\mathbb{S}^{n-1})$. Moreover, the function ψ is uniquely recovered from χ by the formula

$$\psi(x, \xi) = \|\xi\|^{h-1} \chi\left(x - \frac{\langle x, \xi \rangle}{\|\xi\|^2} \xi, \frac{\xi}{\|\xi\|}\right), \quad (2.3)$$

which follows from (2.2); note that $\left(x - \frac{\langle x, \xi \rangle}{\|\xi\|^2} \xi, \frac{\xi}{\|\xi\|}\right) \in T\mathbb{S}^{n-1} \subset \mathcal{Q}$, and thus the right-hand side of (2.3) is correctly defined. Therefore, the X-ray transform can be considered as a linear continuous operator $I: \mathcal{S}(S^h; \mathbb{R}^n) \rightarrow \mathcal{S}(T\mathbb{S}^{n-1})$, and now we are going to describe its image and kernel.

The image of the operator I is described by Theorem 2.10.1 in [S] as follows.

John's Conditions. *A function $\chi \in \mathcal{S}(T\mathbb{S}^{n-1})$ ($n \geq 3$) belongs to the range of the operator I if and only if the following two conditions hold:*

- (1) $\chi(x, -\xi) = (-1)^h \chi(x, \xi)$;
- (2) *The function $\psi \in C^\infty(\mathbb{R}^n \times (\mathbb{R}^n \setminus \{0\}))$ defined by (2.3) satisfies the equations*

$$\left(\frac{\partial^2}{\partial x_{i_1} \partial \xi_{j_1}} - \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x_{j_1} \partial \xi_{i_1}}\right) \dots \left(\frac{\partial^2}{\partial x_{i_{h+1}} \partial \xi_{j_{h+1}}} - \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x_{j_{h+1}} \partial \xi_{i_{h+1}}}\right) \psi = 0 \quad (2.4)$$

written for all indices $1 \leq i_1, j_1, \dots, i_{h+1}, j_{h+1} \leq n$.

Define the symmetric inner differentiation operator $d_s = \sigma \nabla$ by symmetrization of the covariant differentiation operator $\nabla: C^\infty(S^h) \rightarrow C^\infty(T^{h+1})$,

$$(\nabla u)_{i_1, \dots, i_{h+1}} = u_{i_1 \dots i_h; i_{h+1}} = \frac{\partial u_{i_1 \dots i_h}}{\partial x_{i_{h+1}}};$$

it does not depend on the choice of a coordinate system.

The kernel of the operator I is given by (Theorem 2.2.1, (1),(2) in [S]).

Kernel of the ray transform. *Let $n \geq 2$ and $h \geq 1$ be integers. For a compactly-supported field $f \in C_0^\infty(S^h; \mathbb{R}^n)$ the following statements are equivalent:*

- (1) $If = 0$;
- (2) *There exists a compactly-supported field $v \in C_0^\infty(S^{h-1}; \mathbb{R}^n)$ such that its support is contained in the convex hull of the support of f and*

$$d_s v = f. \tag{2.5}$$

Note also that an inversion formula for the operator I given by Theorem 2.10.2 in [S] implies that it is injective on the subspace of divergence-free (=solenoidal) tensor fields.

The 3-dimensional case

For $n = 3$ one notes that the tangent bundle TS^2 over S^2 coincides with the homogeneous space $M = G/(\mathbb{R} \times \text{SO}(2)) = G'/(\mathbb{R} \times \text{O}(2))$, where $G = \mathbb{R}^3 \rtimes \text{SO}(3)$ is the group of proper rigid motions of \mathbb{R}^3 , while $G' = G \cdot \{\pm I_3\}$ is the isometry group of \mathbb{R}^3 . Therefore the operator I for $n = 3$ can be written as $I: \mathcal{S}(S^h; \mathbb{R}^3) \rightarrow \mathcal{S}(M)$

Let us define coordinates on the open subset M_{nh} of M consisting of non-horizontal affine lines. Namely, $m = m(y_1, y_2, \alpha_1, \alpha_2)$ is given by a parametric equation for a current point A on m ,

$$A = (y_1, y_2, 0) + t\alpha = (y_1 + \alpha_1 t, y_2 + \alpha_2 t, t),$$

where t grows in the positive direction of m and thus the vector $\alpha = (\alpha_1, \alpha_2, 1)$ defines the positive direction of m .

We can now rewrite the above general formulas using the coordinates $(y_1, y_2, \alpha_1, \alpha_2)$. First we fix the following notation:

$$k = k(\alpha_1, \alpha_2) = \sqrt{1 + \alpha_1^2 + \alpha_2^2} = \sqrt{1 + \|\alpha\|^2}; \tag{2.6}$$

we will use this notation throughout the paper.

Define the diffeomorphism

$$\Phi: U \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^4, \quad (x, y, z, \xi) = (x, y, z, \xi_1, \xi_2, \xi_3) \mapsto (y, \alpha) = (y_1, y_2, \alpha_1, \alpha_2),$$

on the open set $U = T\mathbb{S}^2 \cap \{\xi_3 > 0\}$ by

$$y_1 = x - \frac{\xi_1}{\xi_3}z, \quad y_2 = y - \frac{\xi_2}{\xi_3}z, \quad \alpha_1 = \frac{\xi_1}{\xi_3}, \quad \alpha_2 = \frac{\xi_2}{\xi_3}. \quad (2.7)$$

Then (U, Φ) is a coordinate patch on M ; this parametrization was used by F. John in his seminal paper [J].

For a function $\chi \in C^\infty(U)$, we define $\varphi \in C^\infty(\mathbb{R}^4)$ by

$$\varphi = k^{h-1}\chi \circ \Phi^{-1}.$$

These two functions are expressed through each other by the formulas

$$\begin{aligned} \chi(x, y, z, \xi) &= \xi_3^{h-1} \varphi \left(x - \frac{\xi_1 z}{\xi_3}, y - \frac{\xi_2 z}{\xi_3}, \frac{\xi_1}{\xi_3}, \frac{\xi_2}{\xi_3} \right), \\ \varphi(y, \alpha) &= k^{h-1} \chi \left(y_1 - \frac{\langle y, \alpha \rangle \alpha_1}{k^2}, y_2 - \frac{\langle y, \alpha \rangle \alpha_2}{k^2}, -\frac{\langle y, \alpha \rangle}{k}, \frac{\alpha_1}{k}, \frac{\alpha_2}{k}, \frac{1}{k} \right). \end{aligned} \quad (2.8)$$

If a function $\chi \in C^\infty(T\mathbb{S}^2)$ satisfies $\chi(-x, -\xi) = (-1)^h \chi(x, \xi)$, then it is uniquely determined by

$$\varphi = k^{h-1} \chi|_U \circ \Phi^{-1} \in C^\infty(\mathbb{R}^4).$$

For a tensor field $f \in \mathcal{S}(S^h; \mathbb{R}^3)$, the function

$$\varphi = k^{h-1} (If)|_U \circ \Phi^{-1} \in C^\infty(\mathbb{R}^4) \quad (2.9)$$

is expressed through f by the formula

$$\varphi(y, \alpha) = \sum_{i_1, \dots, i_h=1}^3 \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} f_{i_1 \dots i_h}(y_1 + \alpha_1 t, y_2 + \alpha_2 t, t) \alpha_{i_1} \dots \alpha_{i_h} dt, \quad (2.10)$$

with $\alpha_3 = 1$, which easily follows from (2.1).

Let

$$L =_{\text{def}} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \alpha_2 \partial y_1} - \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \alpha_1 \partial y_2} \quad (2.11)$$

be the John operator. The main result of [NSV] says that for $n = 3$, a function $\chi \in \mathcal{S}(T\mathbb{S}^2)$ belongs to the range of the operator I for a given $h \geq 0$ if and only if the following two conditions hold:

- (1) $\chi(-x, -\xi) = (-1)^h \chi(x, \xi)$;
- (2) The function $\varphi \in C^\infty(\mathbb{R}^4)$ defined by (2.8) solves the equation

$$L^{h+1} \varphi = 0. \quad (2.12)$$

Thus $\frac{h^2+5h+6}{2}$ equations (2.4) for $n = 3$ are equivalent to equation (2.12).

3 Function w

In what follows we fix a compactly supported smooth solution $(v, p) \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^3)$ of system and define a function $w \in C_0^\infty(M)$ using the following result.

Lemma 3.1 *Let L be an affine plane in \mathbb{R}^3 and let ν_L be its unit normal, then*

$$\int_L \langle v, z \rangle \langle v, \nu_L \rangle d\sigma_L = 0 \quad (3.1)$$

for any $z \in L$ where $d\sigma_L$ is the area element on L .

Proof. We can assume without loss of generality that $L = \{(x_1, x_2, 0)\}$ and $\nu_L = (0, 0, 1) = e_3$, $z = z_1 e_1 + z_2 e_2$ for $e_1 = (1, 0, 0)$, $e_2 = (0, 1, 0)$, $e_3 = (0, 0, 1)$. Then we have

$$\begin{aligned} \int_L \langle v, z \rangle \langle v, \nu \rangle d\sigma_L &= \int (z_1 v^1 + z_2 v^2) v^3 dx_1 dx_2 = \\ &= z_1 \int v^1 v^3 dx_1 dx_2 + z_2 \int v^2 v^3 dx_1 dx_2. \end{aligned}$$

Note that by equation (1.1) with $i = 1$ and $i = 2$ there holds

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial(v^1 v^3)}{\partial x_3} &= -\frac{\partial(v^1 v^2)}{\partial x_2} - \frac{\partial(v^1 v^1)}{\partial x_1} - \frac{\partial p}{\partial x_1}, \\ \frac{\partial(v^2 v^3)}{\partial x_3} &= -\frac{\partial(v^2 v^1)}{\partial x_1} - \frac{\partial(v^2 v^2)}{\partial x_2} - \frac{\partial p}{\partial x_2}, \end{aligned}$$

and thus we get

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial}{\partial x_3} \left(\int v^1 v^3 dx_1 dx_2 \right) &= \int \frac{\partial(v^1 v^3)}{\partial x_3} dx_1 dx_2 = 0, \\ \frac{\partial}{\partial x_3} \left(\int v^2 v^3 dx_1 dx_2 \right) &= \int \frac{\partial(v^2 v^3)}{\partial x_3} dx_1 dx_2 = 0. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the compactly supported functions

$$\int v^1 v^3 dx_1 dx_2 \quad \text{and} \quad \int v^2 v^3 dx_1 dx_2$$

of x_3 on \mathbb{R} are constant and thus vanish everywhere which finishes the proof.

For any fixed value of x_3 , we define the vector field $v^\perp v^3 = (-v^2 v^3, v^1 v^3)$ on the plane (x_1, x_2, x_3) with coordinates $\{x_1, x_2\}$ depending on x_3 as on a parameter, where $u^\perp = (-u_2, u_1)$ for a vector field $u = (u_1, u_2)$ on \mathbb{R}^2 ; note that below we use this notation for vector fields on various planes in \mathbb{R}^3 . Then let us set

$$F = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} (-v^2 v^3, v^1 v^3) dx_3; \quad (3.2)$$

note that F is a compactly supported vector field on the plane $\Pi_{12} = \{(x_1, x_2, 0)\}$ with coordinates $\{x_1, x_2\}$ and (3.1) implies that $IF = 0$. Indeed, choose $x^0 = (x_1^0, x_2^0) \in \mathbb{R}^2$, $0 \neq \xi = (\xi_1, \xi_2) \in \mathbb{R}^2$, and let L be the 2-plane through the point x^0 parallel to the vectors ξ and $(0, 0, 1)$. Then the vector $\nu = (-\xi_1, \xi_2, 0)$ is orthogonal to L and the vector $\tilde{\xi}_a = (-\xi_1, \xi_2, a)$ is parallel to L for every a . By (3.1) we have

$$\int_L \langle v, \tilde{\xi}_a \rangle \langle v, \nu \rangle d\sigma_L = 0$$

and thus we get

$$\int_L (\xi_1 v^1 + \xi_2 v^2 + a v^3)(-\xi_2 v^1 + \xi_1 v^2) d\sigma_L = 0.$$

Substituting the values $a = 0$, $a = 1$ and taking the difference we get the equation $IF = 0$.

Therefore, by (2.5) we have

$$d_s w_0 = \nabla w_0 = -F \quad (3.3)$$

for a unique compactly supported smooth scalar function $w_0 = w_0(x)$.

Let us fix for a moment a point $P^0 = (x_1^0, x_2^0) \in \mathbb{R}^2$, let $r \subset \Pi_{12} = \mathbb{R}^2$ be a ray emanating from P^0 and let e_r be a unit directional vector of r , then in virtue of (3.3) we have

$$\int_r \langle e_r, F \rangle ds_r = w_0(x_1^0, x_2^0) \quad (3.4)$$

for the line element ds_r of r . Let $H \subset \mathbb{R}^3$ be a half-plane perpendicular to Π_{12} with $\partial H = m(x_1^0, x_2^0, 0, 0)$, where $m(x_1^0, x_2^0, 0, 0)$ is the vertical line passing through the point $(x_1^0, x_2^0, 0) \in \Pi_{12}$; therefore, H orthogonally projects onto some ray r emanating from P_0 . Let us consider the integral

$$\int_H v^3 \langle \nu_H, v \rangle d\sigma_H = - \int_r \langle e_r, F \rangle ds_r$$

for the area element $d\sigma_H$ of H and a suitable unit normal ν_H to H , then by (3.4) it does not depend on H for a fixed point $P^0 = (x_1^0, x_2^0)$ and a fixed line $\partial H = m(x_1^0, x_2^0, 0, 0)$. Since the choice of a vertical line in \mathbb{R}^3 is arbitrary we see that the following definition is correct:

Definition 3.2 *Define*

$$w = - \int_{H(m)} \langle e_m, v \rangle \langle \nu_{H(m)}, v \rangle d\sigma_{H(m)} \quad (3.5)$$

where $H(m)$ is a half-plane with $\partial H(m) = m$ and $\nu_{H(m)}$ is the unit normal to $H(m)$ such that the basis $(e_m, \nu_m, \nu_{H(m)})$ is positively oriented for the interior unit normal ν_m to m lying in $H(m)$.

Therefore, w is a compactly supported smooth function on M and it can be written as $w = w(y_1, y_2, \alpha_1, \alpha_2)$ on M_{nh} ; moreover, we get

Lemma 3.3 *We have*

$$w(y_1, y_2, 0, 0) = w_0(y_1, y_2).$$

Proof. Indeed, it is sufficient to verify that

$$\frac{\partial w}{\partial y_1}(0) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} v^2 v^3 dx_3, \quad \frac{\partial w}{\partial y_2}(0) = - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} v^1 v^3 dx_3, \quad (3.6)$$

which is clear, since

$$\begin{aligned} w(\delta, 0, 0, 0) &= - \int_{H_{1,\delta}} v^2 v^3 dx_1 dx_3 = - \int_{\delta}^{\infty} dx_1 \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} v^2 v^3 dx_3, \\ w(0, \mu, 0, 0) &= \int_{H_{2,\mu}} v^1 v^3 dx_2 dx_3 = \int_{\mu}^{\infty} dx_2 \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} v^1 v^3 dx_3 \end{aligned}$$

for the half-planes

$$H_{1,\delta} = \{(x_1 > \delta, 0, x_3)\}, \quad H_{2,\mu} = \{(0, x_2 > \mu, x_3)\}.$$

Now we give two explicit formulas for w which use two specific choices of $H(m)$. We begin by putting

$$k_1 = \sqrt{1 + \alpha_1^2}, \quad k_2 = \sqrt{1 + \alpha_2^2}; \quad (3.7)$$

recall also that $k = \sqrt{1 + \alpha_1^2 + \alpha_2^2}$.

Given a line $m \in M_{nh}$, let $H(m)_1$ and $H(m)_2$ be the half-planes with the border-line m which are determined by the following conditions:

- (i) $H(m)_1$ is parallel to x_1 -axis, $H(m)_2$ is parallel to x_2 -axis;
- (ii) $\langle \nu_i, e_i \rangle > 0$, $i = 1, 2$,

for $e_1 = (1, 0, 0)$, $e_2 = (0, 1, 0)$ and the internal normals $\nu_i \in H(m)_i$, $i = 1, 2$.

We have then

$$\nu_{H(m)_1} = \left(0, \frac{1}{k_2}, -\frac{\alpha_2}{k_2}\right), \quad \nu_{H(m)_2} = \left(-\frac{1}{k_1}, 0, \frac{\alpha_1}{k_1}\right),$$

and the plane $H(m)_1$ forms angle β_1 with the coordinate plane $\Pi_{13} = \{x_2 = 0\}$ where $\cos \beta_1 = 1/k_2$, while the plane $H(m)_2$ forms angle β_2 with the coordinate plane $\Pi_{23} = \{x_1 = 0\}$, $\cos \beta_2 = 1/k_1$. Note also that we have

$$e_m = \frac{1}{k} (\alpha_1, \alpha_2, 1) = \left(\frac{\alpha_1}{k}, \frac{\alpha_2}{k}, \frac{1}{k}\right)$$

for the positive unit directional vector e_m of m .

Proposition 3.4 *Let $d\sigma_i$ be the surface area element on $H(m)_i$ and let $l_i = y_i + x_3\alpha_i$ for $i = 1, 2$. Then in the introduced notation we have*

$$\begin{aligned}
(i) \quad w &= - \int_{H(m)_2} \langle e_m, v \rangle \langle \nu_{H(m)_2}, v \rangle d\sigma_2 = \\
&= - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{l_2}^{\infty} (\langle e_m, v \rangle \langle \nu_{H(m)_2}, v \rangle) |_{(l_1, x_2, x_3)} k_1 dx_2 dx_3 = \\
&= \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{l_2}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k} ((\alpha_1 v^1 + \alpha_2 v^2 + v^3)(v^1 - \alpha_1 v^3)) |_{(l_1, x_2, x_3)} dx_2 dx_3 \quad (3.8)
\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
(ii) \quad w &= - \int_{H(m)_1} \langle e_m, v \rangle \langle \nu_{H(m)_1}, v \rangle d\sigma_1 = \\
&= - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{l_1}^{\infty} (\langle e_m, v \rangle \langle \nu_{H(m)_1}, v \rangle) |_{(x_1, l_2, x_3)} k_2 dx_1 dx_3 = \\
&= - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{l_1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{k} ((\alpha_1 v^1 + \alpha_2 v^2 + v^3)(v^2 - \alpha_2 v^3)) |_{(x_1, l_2, x_3)} dx_1 dx_3. \quad (3.9)
\end{aligned}$$

Proof. This is an elementary calculation which we give only for $H(m)_1$, since the case of $H(m)_2$ is completely similar; note only that the choice of normals $\nu_{H(m)_1}$ and $\nu_{H(m)_2}$ comes from the orientation condition. Let us fix the values of y_1, y_2, α_1 , and α_2 , and let $H_i \supset H(m)_i$ be an affine plane containing $H(m)_i$ for $i = 1, 2$. Then an equation of H_1 is of the form $ax_2 + bx_3 + c = 0$, and therefore $c = -ay_2$. Since $e_m \in \bar{H}_1$ for the vector plane \bar{H}_1 parallel to H_1 , we get $a\alpha_2 + b = 0$, and we can choose $a = 1, b = -\alpha_2$, so the equation takes the form

$$x_2 - x_3\alpha_2 - y_2 = 0,$$

and therefore $x_2 = x_3\alpha_2 + y_2$ on the half-plane $H(m)_1$. Since $\cos \beta_1 = \cos \arctan \alpha_2 = \frac{1}{k_2}$, we see that $d\sigma_1 = k_2 dx_1 dx_3$. Then one notes that the orthogonal projection $\pi_{13}(m)$ of m on the coordinate plane $\Pi_{13} = \{x_2 = 0\}$ is given by

$$\pi_{13}(m) = \Pi_{13} \cap H_2 = \{x_1 = y_1 + \alpha_1 x_3\},$$

and thus $H(m)_1$ projects onto

$$\{x_1 > y_1 + x_3\alpha_1\} \subset \Pi_{13},$$

since $\langle \nu_2, e_2 \rangle > 0$, which completes the proof.

The formulas (3.8)–(3.9) are somewhat cumbersome and use below only the following simple consequence.

Corollary 3.5 *In the first order of (α_1, α_2) , ignoring terms with total $\deg_{\alpha} \geq 2$, we have the following expressions:*

$$w = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{l_2}^{\infty} (\alpha_2 v^1 v^2 + v^1 v^3 + \alpha_1 (v^1)^2 - \alpha_1 (v^3)^2) |_{(l_1, x_2, x_3)} dx_2 dx_3, \quad (3.10)$$

$$w = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{l_1}^{\infty} (\alpha_2 (v^3)^2 - \alpha_1 v^1 v^2 - v^2 v^3 - \alpha_2 (v^2)^2) |_{(x_1, l_2, x_3)} dx_1 dx_3. \quad (3.11)$$

This corollary permits to calculate the quantities

$$\frac{\partial^m w}{\partial y_1^i \partial y_2^j \partial \alpha_1^k \partial \alpha_2^l}(0), \quad i + j + k + l = m,$$

for $k + l \leq 1$, and in particular, implies the following.

Corollary 3.6 *We have*

$$\frac{\partial^2 w}{\partial y_2 \partial \alpha_1}(0) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \left((v^3)^2 - (v^1)^2 - x_3 \frac{\partial (v^3 v^1)}{\partial x_1} \right) |_{(0,0,x_3)} dx_3, \quad (3.12)$$

$$\frac{\partial^2 w}{\partial y_1 \partial \alpha_2}(0) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \left((v^2)^2 - (v^3)^2 + x_3 \frac{\partial (v^3 v^2)}{\partial x_2} \right) |_{(0,0,x_3)} dx_3, \quad (3.13)$$

$$\frac{\partial^2 w}{\partial y_1^2}(0) + \frac{\partial^2 w}{\partial y_2^2}(0) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \left(\frac{\partial (v^2 v^3)}{\partial x_1} - \frac{\partial (v^1 v^3)}{\partial x_2} \right) |_{(0,0,x_3)} dx_3. \quad (3.14)$$

Proof of (3.12). From (3.10) we have

$$w(0, y_2, \alpha_1, 0) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{y_2}^{\infty} (v^1 v^3 + (v^1)^2 \alpha_1 - (v^3)^2 \alpha_1) |_{(x_3 \alpha_1, x_2, x_3)} dx_2 dx_3,$$

whence we get

$$\frac{\partial w(0, 0, \alpha_1, 0)}{\partial y_2} = - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} (v^1 v^3 + (v^1)^2 \alpha_1 - (v^3)^2 \alpha_1) |_{(\alpha_1 x_3, 0, x_3)} dx_3$$

and, finally,

$$\frac{\partial^2 w}{\partial y_2 \partial \alpha_1}(0) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \left((v^3)^2 - (v^1)^2 - x_3 \frac{\partial (v^3 v^1)}{\partial x_1} \right) |_{(0,0,x_3)} dx_3.$$

The proof of (3.13) is completely similar and that of (3.14) is even simpler.

Taking then the difference of (3.12) and (3.13) we get the following formula:

$$\frac{\partial^2 w}{\partial y_1 \partial \alpha_2}(0) - \frac{\partial^2 w}{\partial y_2 \partial \alpha_1}(0) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} (p + (v^1)^2 + (v^2)^2 - (v^3)^2) |_{(0,0,x_3)} dx_3. \quad (3.15)$$

Indeed, we have $\frac{\partial (v^3 v^1)}{\partial x_1} + \frac{\partial (v^3 v^2)}{\partial x_2} = -\frac{\partial (p + (v^3)^2)}{\partial x_3}$ by (1.1) and integrating

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} x_3 \left(\frac{\partial (v^3 v^1)}{\partial x_1} + \frac{\partial (v^3 v^2)}{\partial x_2} \right) |_{(0,0,x_3)} dx_3 = - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \frac{x_3 \partial (p + (v^3)^2)}{\partial x_3} |_{(0,0,x_3)} dx_3$$

by parts we get (3.15).

4 Operators P and Δ_M

Let us define first an order 2 differential operator P on the space $C^2(M)$.

Recall that $M = G/(\mathbb{R} \times \text{SO}(2)) = G'/(\mathbb{R} \times \text{O}(2))$ for $G = \mathbb{R}^3 \rtimes \text{SO}(3)$ and $G' = G \cdot \{\pm I_3\}$.

Definition 4.1 *Let $f \in C^2(M)$, $m_0 \in M$, and let $g(m_0) = 0 = (0, 0, 0, 0)$ for $g \in G$. Then*

$$Pf(m_0) =_{\text{def}} Lf_g(0),$$

where $f_g(m) = f(g^{-1}(m))$ for any $m \in M$ and L is defined by (2.11).

Lemma 4.2 *This definition is correct.*

Proof. We must verify that $Lf_g(0) = Lf_h(0)$ for any $g, h \in G$ such that $g(m_0) = h(m_0) = (0)$.

We put $u = g^{-1}h$, $F = f_u$, and thus we have to verify that $LF(0) = LF_u(0)$ for $u \in \mathbb{R} \times \text{SO}(2) = St_0$, $St_0 < G$ being the stabilizer of the vertical line. It is sufficient to verify the equality separately for $u \in \mathbb{R}$ and $u \in \text{SO}(2)$. It is clear for a vertical shift $u \in \mathbb{R}$ since L has constant coefficients; for a rotation $u \in \text{SO}(2)$ by angle θ in the horizontal plane one easily calculates

$$F_u(y_1, y_2, \alpha_1, \alpha_2) =$$

$$= F(y_1 \cos \theta - y_2 \sin \theta, y_2 \cos \theta + y_1 \sin \theta, \alpha_1 \cos \theta - \alpha_2 \sin \theta, \alpha_2 \cos \theta + \alpha_1 \sin \theta),$$

and a simple calculation shows the necessary equation, since we get

$$\frac{\partial^2 F_u(0)}{\partial \alpha_2 \partial y_1} = \cos^2 \theta \frac{\partial^2 F(0)}{\partial \alpha_2 \partial y_1} - \sin^2 \theta \frac{\partial^2 F(0)}{\partial \alpha_1 \partial y_2} + \cos \theta \sin \theta \left(\frac{\partial^2 F(0)}{\partial \alpha_1 \partial y_1} - \frac{\partial^2 F(0)}{\partial \alpha_2 \partial y_2} \right),$$

$$\frac{\partial^2 F_u(0)}{\partial \alpha_1 \partial y_2} = \cos^2 \theta \frac{\partial^2 F(0)}{\partial \alpha_1 \partial y_2} - \sin^2 \theta \frac{\partial^2 F(0)}{\partial \alpha_2 \partial y_1} + \cos \theta \sin \theta \left(\frac{\partial^2 F(0)}{\partial \alpha_1 \partial y_1} - \frac{\partial^2 F(0)}{\partial \alpha_2 \partial y_2} \right).$$

The proof is finished.

We can now rewrite (3.15) as follows

$$P_0 w = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} (p + (v^1)^2 + (v^2)^2 - (v^3)^2) dx_3 = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} (p + |v|^2 - 2(v^3)^2) dx_3 \quad (4.1)$$

for the operator P_0 being P evaluated at 0, which implies that

$$Pw = \int_m (p + |v|^2 - 2\langle v, e_m \rangle^2) ds = \int_m (p + |v|^2 - 2v \otimes v) ds = IQ_0(m) \quad (4.2)$$

for the quadratic tensor field $Q_0 = (p + |v|^2)\delta_{ij} - 2v \otimes v$ and any $m \in M$, since P is G -invariant; therefore $Pw = IQ_0$ as functions on M .

We will also use the fiber-wise Laplacian $\Delta_M = \Delta_{y_1, y_2}$ acting in tangent planes to \mathbb{S}^2 ; it is defined by the usual formula

$$\Delta_M f(m) = \frac{\partial^2 f(m)}{\partial y_1^2} + \frac{\partial^2 f(m)}{\partial y_2^2}$$

for $f \in C^2(M)$ and a vertical line $m = m(y_1, y_2, 0, 0)$. For any $m \in M$ the value $\Delta_M f(m)$ is determined by the G -invariance condition as for the operator P above, and the rotational symmetry of Δ_{y_1, y_2} guarantees the correctness of that definition. Note that the operators P , Δ_M commute and note also that (2.10) implies that for $Q \in C_0^\infty(S^h, \mathbb{R}^3)$ there holds a commutation rule

$$I(\Delta Q) = \Delta_M(IQ). \quad (4.3)$$

Remark 4.1. The algebra $D_{G'}(M)$ of the G' -invariant differential operators on M is freely generated by Δ_M and P^2 as a commutative algebra, see [GH].

One can also give explicit formulas for P and Δ_M in our coordinates, namely,

$$P = k^2 L + \alpha_1 \frac{\partial}{\partial y_2} - \alpha_2 \frac{\partial}{\partial y_1}, \quad \Delta_M = k_1^2 \frac{\partial^2}{\partial y_1^2} + k_2^2 \frac{\partial^2}{\partial y_2^2} + 2\alpha_1 \alpha_2 \frac{\partial^2}{\partial y_1 \partial y_2}. \quad (4.4)$$

Now we deduce the principal linear differential equation for w .

Proposition 4.3 *We have*

$$P^2 w = -4\Delta_M w. \quad (4.5)$$

Proof. We begin with the following simple result.

Lemma 4.4 *If $f \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^3)$ is a scalar function then $P(I f) = 0$.*

Indeed, since P is G -invariant, it is sufficient to verify the equation at a single point $0 \in M$ which follows from (2.12) with $h = 0$.

Lemma 4.4 implies by (4.2) that

$$P^2 w = P I Q_0 = P I ((p + |v|^2) \delta_{ij} - 2v \otimes v) = -2P I (v \otimes v) \quad (4.6)$$

for a compactly supported vector field v solving (1.1). Moreover, we have

$$I(v \otimes v)(y_1, y_2, \alpha_1, \alpha_2) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} ((v^3)^2 + 2v^1 v^3 \alpha_1 + 2v^2 v^3 \alpha_2) dx_3 + O(|\alpha|^2)$$

and thus by (3.14) we get

$$P I (v \otimes v)(0) = P_0 I (v \otimes v) = 2 \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \left(\frac{\partial (v^2 v^3)}{\partial x_1} - \frac{\partial (v^1 v^3)}{\partial x_2} \right) dx_3 = 2\Delta_M w(0),$$

hence $P I (v \otimes v) = 2\Delta_M w$ everywhere and $P^2 w = -4\Delta_M w$ by (4.6).

Corollary 4.5 *The equation*

$$IQ_0(m) = 0, \forall m \in M \quad (4.7)$$

implies Conjecture 1.2.

Ideed, if $IQ_0(m) = 0$ then $\Delta_M w(m) = -\frac{1}{4}P^2 w(m) = -\frac{1}{4}PIQ_0(m) = 0$ and thus $w = 0$, since w is compactly supported.

Invariant definitions and the second proof of (4.5)

Now let us give a description of P and Δ_M in terms of the Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} of G . We have $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{so}(3) \oplus \mathfrak{r}(3) = \mathbb{R}^3 \oplus \mathbb{R}^3$ as vector spaces, where $\mathfrak{r}(3)$ is 3-dimensional and abelian. Thus, we can write any $g \in \mathfrak{g}$ as $g = (r; s) \in \mathfrak{so}(3) \oplus \mathfrak{r}(3)$, and the commutators in \mathfrak{g} are given by

$$[(r_1; 0), (r_2; 0)] = (r_1 \times r_2; 0), [(0; s_1), (0; s_2)] = 0, [(r; 0), (0; s)] = (0; r \times s).$$

Let (R_1, R_2, R_3) be the standard basis of $\mathfrak{so}(3)$, and (S_1, S_2, S_3) be that of $\mathfrak{r}(3)$. Consider the following operators on M :

$$\tilde{\Delta}_M = S_1^2 + S_2^2 + S_3^2, \tilde{P} = S_1 R_1 + S_2 R_2 + S_3 R_3, \quad (4.8)$$

where we denote simply by g the action on M of an element $g \in U(\mathfrak{g})$ of the universal enveloping algebra $U(\mathfrak{g})$; therefore, S_i acts as the infinitesimal shift in the x_i -direction, and R_i as the infinitesimal rotation about x_i -axis.

Proposition 4.6 *We have $\tilde{\Delta}_M = \Delta_M$ and $\tilde{P} = P$.*

Proof. First, the operators $\tilde{\Delta}_M$ and \tilde{P} are G -invariant. Indeed, it follows from the rotational invariance of the quadratic form $x_1^2 + x_2^2 + x_3^2$ that $\tilde{\Delta}_M$ is rotationally invariant; for translations, the same follows from the commutation rule $S_i S_j = S_j S_i$ for $i, j = 1, 2, 3$.

To prove the invariance of \tilde{P} under the x_3 -axis rotation we verify that \tilde{P} and R_3 commute which can be shown as follows:

$$[S_1 R_1, R_3] = -S_2 R_1 - S_1 R_2, [S_2 R_2, R_3] = S_1 R_2 + S_2 R_1, [S_3 R_3, R_3] = 0.$$

Similarly we get its invariance under the x_1 - and x_2 -axis rotations and thus its $SO(3)$ -invariance, while its x_3 -translations invariance follows from

$$[S_1 R_1, S_3] = -S_1 S_2, [S_2 R_2, S_3] = S_1 S_2, [S_3 R_3, S_3] = 0.$$

Since any line is $SO(3)$ -conjugate to a vertical one, \tilde{P} is G -invariant. Finally, we have $\tilde{\Delta}_M(m_0) = \Delta_M(m_0)$, $\tilde{P}(m_0) = P(m_0)$ for $m_0 = m(0, 0, 0, 0)$, which finishes the proof, since Δ_M and P are both G -invariant. Indeed, e.g., in $\tilde{P}(m_0)$ the terms $S_1 R_1 + S_2 R_2$ give $L(0)$, while $S_3 R_3$ vanishes since m_0 is invariant under both S_3 and R_3 .

Second proof of Proposition 4.3. Let $t \in \mathbb{R}$, and let $l_t = m(t, 0, 0, 0)$ be a vertical line in the plane Π_{13} ; note that $\Pi_{13} = \bigcup_{t \in \mathbb{R}} l_t$.

Lemma 4.7 For $f \in C_0^\infty(M)$ we have

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}} P^2 f(l_t) dt = \int_{\mathbb{R}} S_2^2 R_2^2 f(l_t) dt. \quad (4.9)$$

Proof. Define the operators A and B by $A = S_1 R_1 P$, $B = S_3 R_3 P$; then

$$P^2 = A + B + S_2 R_2 P = A + B + S_2 R_2 (S_1 R_1 + S_2 R_2 + S_3 R_3).$$

Since $Af(l_t)$ is a derivative of a function of t , while B vanishes identically on Π_{13} , we get that

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}} (Af(l_t) + Bf(l_t)) dt = 0.$$

We have also

$$S_2 R_2 S_1 R_1(f(l_t)) = S_1 S_2 R_2 R_1(f(l_t)) - S_3 S_2 R_1(f(l_t)),$$

thus the integral of the left-hand side is zero and the same is true for

$$S_2 R_2 S_3 R_3(f(l_t)) = S_3 S_2 R_2 R_3(f(l_t)) + S_1 S_2 R_3(f(l_t));$$

since $S_2 R_2 S_2 R_2 = S_2^2 R_2^2$ we get the conclusion.

Lemma 4.8 We have

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}} R_2^2 w(l_t) dt = -4 \int_{\mathbb{R}} w(l_t) dt. \quad (4.10)$$

Proof. Let us fix a positive constant $c < \frac{\pi}{2}$, and let $l_t^\theta = \left(\frac{t}{\cos(\theta)}, 0, \tan(\theta), 0\right)$ for any θ with $|\theta| < c$; therefore, l_t^θ is just the line l_t rotated (in the clockwise direction) through the angle θ about the origin in the plane Π_{13} , and for any t we have

$$R_2^2 w(l_t^\theta)|_{\theta=0} = \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta^2} w(l_t^\theta)|_{\theta=0}.$$

Let $e_1^\theta = (\cos \theta, 0, -\sin \theta)$, $e_3^\theta = (\sin \theta, 0, \cos \theta)$ then we have

$$w(l_t^\theta) = \frac{1}{\cos \theta} \int_0^\infty \int_{l_t} \langle v, e_1^\theta \rangle \langle v, e_3^\theta \rangle |_{(\frac{t}{\cos \theta} + x_3 \tan \theta, x_2, x_3)} dx_3 dx_2$$

by (3.8), and if we put $t = x_1 \cos \theta - x_3 \sin \theta$ we get that

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}} w(l_t^\theta) dt = \frac{1}{\cos \theta} \int_0^\infty \int_{\mathbb{R}^2} \langle v, e_1^\theta \rangle \langle v, e_3^\theta \rangle dx_3 dx_2 dt = \int_{x_2 > 0} \langle v, e_1^\theta \rangle \langle v, e_3^\theta \rangle dx_1 dx_2 dx_3.$$

Therefore, since $\langle v, e_1^\theta \rangle \langle v, e_3^\theta \rangle = v^1 v^3 \cos 2\theta + ((v^1)^2 - (v^3)^2) \frac{\sin 2\theta}{2}$ we have

$$\frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta^2} \int_{\mathbb{R}} w(l_t^\theta) dt = \int_{x_2 > 0} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta^2} (\langle v, e_1^\theta \rangle \langle v, e_3^\theta \rangle) dx_1 dx_2 dx_3 = -4 \int_{x_2 > 0} (\langle v, e_1^\theta \rangle \langle v, e_3^\theta \rangle) dx_1 dx_2 dx_3$$

and evaluating at $\theta = 0$ we get a proof of Lemma 4.8.

We can finish now our second proof of (4.5). Indeed, (4.9)–(4.10) imply that

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}} P^2 w(l_t) dt = \int_{\mathbb{R}} S_2^2 R_2^2 w(l_t) dt = -4 \int_{\mathbb{R}} S_2^2 w(l_t) dt = -4 \int_{\mathbb{R}} \Delta_M w(l_t) dt. \quad (4.11)$$

If we define a function $F(x_1, x_2)$ on \mathbb{R}^2 by

$$F(x_1, x_2) = P^2 w(x_1, x_2, 0, 0) + 4\Delta_M w(x_1, x_2, 0, 0),$$

then the integral of F over the x_1 -axis vanishes by (4.11). Changing the coordinate system x_1, x_2 in \mathbb{R}^2 , we get the same for the integral of F over any line in the plane $\{x_1, x_2\}$. Thus $F = 0$ by Radon's theorem, and we get the conclusion.

Remark 4.2. One can compare (4.5) with results that can be deduced from (2.12) for $h = 2$. A simple direct calculation using (4.4) gives for $h = 2$

$$P^3 \psi + 4P\Delta_M \psi = 0 \quad (4.12)$$

if $\psi = IQ$ for $Q \in C_0^\infty(S^2, \mathbb{R}^3)$. Applying then (4.12) to $\psi = \Delta_M w$ (which can be written as $\Delta_M w = IQ'$ for a certain Q' not given here) we obtain $P^3 \Delta_M w + 4P\Delta_M^2 w = \Delta_M P(P^2 w + 4\Delta_M w) = 0$ and thus $P(P^2 w + 4\Delta_M w) = 0$ which is much weaker than (4.5) since the kernel of P is enormous.

However, it is possible to construct a function $u \in C_0^\infty(M)$ verifying

$$P\Delta_M u = -2\Delta_M w, \quad \Delta_M u = IQ_1$$

for some $Q_1 \in C_0^\infty(S^2, \mathbb{R}^3)$ and applying (4.12) to $\psi = \Delta_M u = IQ_1$ we get

$$0 = P^3 \Delta_M u + 4\Delta_M^2 P u = -2\Delta_M (P^2 w + 4\Delta_M w),$$

and thus we reprove (4.5). We can define u similarly to (3.5) as follows

$$u = \int_{H(m)} \text{dist}(P, m) (p + \langle \nu_{H(m)}, v \rangle^2) d\sigma_{H(m)},$$

where $\text{dist}(P, m)$ is the distance from a point $P \in H(m)$ to m .

5 A Radon Plane Transform

Let us define a Radon tensor plane transform J as follows:

$$JQ(L) = \int_L \text{tr}(Q|_L) d\sigma_L \quad (5.1)$$

for an affine plane $L \subset \mathbb{R}^3$ and $Q \in C^\infty(S^2; \mathbb{R}^3)$ satisfying

$$|Q(x)| \leq C(1 + |x|)^{-2-\varepsilon}, \quad (5.2)$$

for some $\varepsilon > 0$, where $Q|_L$ is the restrictio onto L ; definition is correct and we get a bounded linear operator

$$J: \mathcal{S}(S^2; \mathbb{R}^3) \longrightarrow \mathcal{S}(\mathbb{R}P^3)$$

for the manifold $\mathbb{R}P^3$ of affine planes $L \subset \mathbb{R}^3$.

Proposition 5.1 *We have $JQ_0(L) = 0$.*

Proof. We have for any affine plane $L \subset \mathbb{R}^3$ that

$$JQ_0(L) = 2 \int_L (p + \langle v, \nu_L \rangle)^2 d\sigma_L = 0.$$

Indeed, setting without loss of generality $L = \Pi_{12}$, $\nu_L = e_3$ we get that

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial JQ_0}{\partial x_3}(\Pi_{12}) &= \frac{\partial}{\partial x_3} \left(\int_L (p + \langle v, \nu_L \rangle)^2 d\sigma_L \right) = \\ &= \int_{\Pi_{12}} \frac{\partial(p + (v^3)^2)}{\partial x_3} dx_1 dx_2 = - \int_{\Pi_{12}} \left(\frac{\partial(v^1 v^3)}{\partial x_1} + \frac{\partial(v^2 v^3)}{\partial x_2} \right) dx_1 dx_2 = 0. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, $JQ_0(\Pi_{12})$ does not depend on x_3 and hence equals 0.

Let us explain in what Proposition 5.1 partially confirms (4.7) and thus Conjecture 1.2. One can verify that the condition $JQ_0(L) = 0, \forall L \in \mathbb{R}P^3$ is equivalent to the following equation for the components $\{q^{ij}\}$ of Q_0 :

$$\sum_{i,j=1}^3 \frac{\partial^2 q^{ij}}{\partial x_i \partial x_j} = \Delta \text{tr } Q_0, \quad (5.3)$$

while $IQ_0(m) = 0, \forall m \in M$ is equivalent to the following system

$$\frac{2 \partial q^{ij}}{\partial x_i \partial x_j} = \frac{\partial^2 q^{ii}}{\partial x_j^2} + \frac{\partial^2 q^{jj}}{\partial x_i^2}, \quad 1 \leq i < j \leq 3$$

of 3 equations and their sum gives (5.3).

6 A Uniqueness Theorem

Now we can deduce Conjecture 1.1 from Conjecture 1.2.

Theorem 6.1 *Let $(v, p) \in \mathbb{C}_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^3)$ be a solution of (1.1)–(1.3) and let the corresponding function w vanish everywhere on M then $(v; p) = 0$ everywhere.*

Proof. For $m \in M$ denote by t a vector parallel to m and by n a vector perpendicular to m , then the equality $w = 0$ implies that

$$\int_m \langle v, t \rangle \langle v, n \rangle ds = 0. \quad (6.1)$$

Let $L \subset \mathbb{R}^3$ be an affine plane; let $v_n = \langle \nu_L, v \rangle$ and $v_t = v - v_n \nu_L$ be its components normal to L and tangent to L , respectively. Then by (6.1) we have $IV = 0$ for the vector field $V = v_n v_t$ on L , and hence $\text{curl}_L V = 0$ for the curl operator curl_L on L which gives

$$v_n \text{curl}_L v_t - \langle v_t^\perp, \nabla_L v_n \rangle = -v_n \omega_n - \langle v_t^\perp, \nabla_L v_n \rangle = 0 \quad (6.2)$$

for the normal component ω_n of $\omega = \text{curl } v$ and the gradient operator ∇_L on L . We will apply (6.2) to various planes $L \subset \mathbb{R}^3$.

First take $L = \Pi_{12}$, then $v_t = (v^1, v^2, 0)$, $v_n = v^3$, $V = v^3 v_t$ and we get

$$v^3 \text{curl}_L v_t - \langle v_t^\perp, \nabla v^3 \rangle = v^3 \left(\frac{\partial v^1}{\partial x_2} - \frac{\partial v^2}{\partial x_1} \right) - v^1 \frac{\partial v^3}{\partial x_2} + v^2 \frac{\partial v^3}{\partial x_1} = 0. \quad (6.3)$$

Let now

$$\Omega =_{\text{def}} \{u \in \mathbb{R}^3 | v(u) \neq 0, \omega(u) \neq 0\}$$

and let $D =_{\text{def}} \mathbb{R}^3 \setminus \bar{\Omega}$. We can suppose that Ω is not empty, since otherwise in a neighborhood of a point x_0 where the maximum of $|v|$ is attained we have $\Delta v = -\text{curl curl } v + \nabla \text{div } v = 0$ and thus v is harmonic which contradicts the maximum principle for harmonic fields. It follows then that $v = 0$ in this neighborhood and thus everywhere.

In orthonormal coordinates with $v^1(u_0) = v^2(u_0) = 0$ we get for $u_0 \in \Omega$ that

$$v^3 \left(\frac{\partial v^1}{\partial x_2} - \frac{\partial v^2}{\partial x_1} \right) (u_0) = 0 \text{ and therefore } \langle v, \omega \rangle (u_0) = 0. \quad (6.4)$$

Therefore $\langle v, \omega \rangle = 0$ holds everywhere on Ω , thus on \mathbb{R}^3 and differentiating this relation in the v -direction we obtain

$$\langle v \nabla v, \omega \rangle + \langle v \nabla \omega, v \rangle = 0; \quad (6.5)$$

using the commutation law

$$v \nabla \omega = \omega \nabla v \quad (6.6)$$

we get then from (6.5) that

$$\langle v \nabla v, \omega \rangle + \langle \omega \nabla v, v \rangle = 0. \quad (6.7)$$

In orthonormal coordinates x_1, x_2, x_3 with x_1 directed along v and x_2 directed along ω at u_0 we can rewrite (6.7) as follows

$$\frac{\partial v^1}{\partial x_2}(u_0) + \frac{\partial v^2}{\partial x_1}(u_0) = 0, \quad (6.8)$$

since $v(u_0) \neq 0$ and $\omega(u_0) \neq 0$. Below we always use that coordinate system.

Moreover, since the vector ω is directed along x_2 , we get

$$\frac{\partial v^1}{\partial x_2}(u_0) = \frac{\partial v^2}{\partial x_1}(u_0) \text{ and therefore } \frac{\partial v^1}{\partial x_2}(u_0) = \frac{\partial v^2}{\partial x_1}(u_0) = 0. \quad (6.9)$$

Let then $L = \Pi_{13}$, and thus $v_t = (v^1, 0, v^3)$, $v_n = v^2$, $V = v^2 v_t$. Since $v_n(u_0) = 0$, we get from (6.2) and (6.6) that

$$\frac{\partial v^2}{\partial x_3}(u_0) = 0 \text{ and hence } \frac{\partial v^3}{\partial x_2}(u_0) = 0 \text{ and } \frac{\partial \omega^3}{\partial x_1}(u_0) = 0. \quad (6.10)$$

Then, differentiating (6.4) with respect to x_1 and x_3 at u_0 , we get

$$\frac{\partial \omega^1}{\partial x_1}(u_0) = 0 \text{ and } \frac{\partial \omega^1}{\partial x_3}(u_0) = 0. \quad (6.11)$$

Now we take $L = \{x_2 + x_3 = 0\}$, therefore $v_n = \frac{v^2+v^3}{\sqrt{2}}$, $\nu_L = \left(0, \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}, \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}\right)$, $v_t = \left(v^1, \frac{v^2-v^3}{2}, \frac{v^3-v^2}{2}\right)$ and $V = \frac{v^2+v^3}{\sqrt{2}} \left(v^1, \frac{v^2-v^3}{\sqrt{2}}\right)_B$ in the orthonormal basis $\mathcal{B} = \left\{e'_1 = (1, 0, 0), e'_2 = \left(0, \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}, -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}\right)\right\}$. Since $v_n(u_0) = 0$ and the vector $v_t^\perp(u_0)$ is directed along e'_1 , we get from (6.2) that

$$v^1(u_0) \left(\frac{\partial v^2}{\partial x_2}(u_0) + \frac{\partial v^2}{\partial x_3}(u_0) - \frac{\partial v^3}{\partial x_2}(u_0) - \frac{\partial v^3}{\partial x_3}(u_0) \right) = 0$$

and thus

$$\frac{\partial v^2}{\partial x_2}(u_0) + \frac{\partial v^2}{\partial x_3}(u_0) - \frac{\partial v^3}{\partial x_2}(u_0) - \frac{\partial v^3}{\partial x_3}(u_0) = 0.$$

Therefore by (6.10) we get also

$$\frac{\partial v^2}{\partial x_2}(u_0) = \frac{\partial v^3}{\partial x_3}(u_0). \quad (6.12)$$

For $L = \{x_1 + x_2 = 0\}$ we then have $v_n = \frac{v^1+v^2}{\sqrt{2}}$, $\nu_L = \left(\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}, \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}, 0\right)$, $v_t = \left(\frac{v^1-v^2}{2}, \frac{v^2-v^1}{2}, v^3\right)$ and thus $V = \frac{v^1+v^2}{\sqrt{2}} \left(\frac{v^1-v^2}{\sqrt{2}}, v^3\right)_{B'}$ in the plane basis $\mathcal{B}' = \left\{\left(\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}, -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}, 0\right), (0, 0, 1)\right\}$. Since the vector $v_t^\perp(u_0)$ is directed along $(0, 0, 1)$ we get from (6.2) and (6.9) that

$$v^1(u_0) \left(\omega^2(u_0) + \frac{\partial v^1}{\partial x_3}(u_0) + \frac{\partial v^2}{\partial x_3}(u_0) \right) = 0;$$

therefore, we get by (6.10) that

$$\omega^2(u_0) = -\frac{\partial v^1}{\partial x_3}(u_0). \quad (6.13)$$

If a trajectory $\gamma = \gamma(t)$ of the flow v is parametrized by t , i.e. $\frac{d\gamma}{dt} = v$, we have in virtue of (6.6) a differential inequality

$$|q'(t)| \leq C|q(t)|,$$

for the function $q(t) =_{\text{def}} \omega^2(\gamma(t))$ and a positive constant C . Therefore, if $q(0) \neq 0$ then $q(t) \neq 0$ for any $t \in \mathbb{R}$, thus any trajectory of v does not cross $\partial\Omega = \partial D$ and hence stays either in $\bar{\Omega}$ or in \bar{D} .

Using (6.9), we see that $|v|$ is constant on any trajectory Γ of the vector field ω and, conversely, (6.10) and (6.11) imply that ω has a constant direction on any trajectory γ of the flow v and therefore $\gamma \subset \Pi_\gamma$ is a plane curve for an affine plane Π_γ . Set $\xi = \omega/|\omega|$, then we can define the vector $\xi(\gamma)$ for any $\gamma \subset \Omega$ and $\xi(\gamma) \perp \Pi_\gamma$. For $z \in \Omega$ we get

$$\frac{\partial \xi}{\partial x_1}(z) = 0 \quad (6.14)$$

since $v(z)$ is parallel to x_1 , $\omega(z)$ is parallel to x_2 and $\xi(z) = (0, 1, 0)$; thus (6.11) implies that

$$\frac{\partial \xi^1}{\partial x_3}(z) = 0. \quad (6.15)$$

Therefore ξ satisfies the Frobenius integrability condition $\langle \xi, \text{curl} \xi \rangle = 0$ and hence in a neighborhood of z there exists a smooth function $U(x)$ with $\nabla U \neq 0$ parallel to ξ . Moreover, U is a first integral of the flow v since $\partial U / \partial v = 0$. Let then S be a level surface of U containing z , then S is foliated by the trajectories of v and the vector field ξ defines the Gauss map $\xi : S \rightarrow \mathbb{S}^2$. Since ξ is constant on the trajectories of v the image $\beta = \xi(S) \subset \mathbb{S}^2$ is a curve or a point. Moreover, β is orthogonal to the axis x_1 at $\xi(\gamma)$ by (6.14)–(6.15) and (6.13) implies that γ is not a straight line. Thus we can choose $z' \in \gamma, z' \neq z$ and get that γ is orthogonal at $\xi(\gamma)$ to some line not parallel to x_1 . Therefore $\text{rank} \xi(\gamma) = 0$, hence $\text{rank} \xi = 0$ on S , ξ is constant on S and thus S is a plane. We see that a neighborhood of z in \mathbb{R}^3 is foliated by planes invariant under the flow v .

Denote by $\gamma(s, t) \subset \Omega$ the trajectory of v passing through $z + (0, s, 0)$, and let L_s^z be the plane containing $\gamma(s, t)$. Then $L_s^z \perp \omega(z + (0, s, 0))$ and the planes L_s^z are invariant under the flow v and foliate a neighborhood of z in \mathbb{R}^3 . Let $\lambda(s, y)$ for $y \in \Pi_{13}$ be an affine function on Π_{13} with the graph L_s^z and let $l_z(y) = \frac{\partial \lambda}{\partial s}(0, y)$ then l_z is an affine linear function. Denote by G a connected component of $\Pi_{13} \cap \Omega$, $z \in G$ then G is invariant under the flow v . We fix some $z' \in G$ and set

$$l = l_{z'},$$

then $l(z') = 1$.

Let $z_1, z_2 \in G$, then some neighborhoods of z_1 and z_2 in \mathbb{R}^3 are foliated by the same set of planes invariant under the flow v and thus the sets of planes $L_s^{z_1}$ and $L_s^{z_2}$ are the same after a reparametrization. Therefore l does not vanish in G and we have $l_{z_1} = l_{z_2}/l_{z_2}(z_1)$. Set now

$$h(t) = \frac{\partial \gamma(s, t)}{\partial s} \Big|_{s=0}$$

then $h(0) = (0, 1, 0)$ and thus by (6.6) the vector field h is proportional to ω on $\gamma = \gamma(0, t)$. Since ω is orthogonal to Π_{13} on γ we get that $h(y) = (0, l(y), 0)$,

$$\frac{\partial v^2}{\partial x_2}(y) = \frac{\partial \ln l}{\partial v}(y) \quad (6.16)$$

for any $y \in \gamma$ and l does not vanish on γ .

It follows by (6.16) and (6.12) that

$$\frac{\partial v^3}{\partial x_3}(y) = \frac{\partial \ln l}{\partial v}(y) \quad (6.17)$$

and since $\operatorname{div} v = 0$ there holds (recall that x_1 is directed along $v(y)$)

$$\frac{\partial |v|}{\partial x_1}(y) = -2 \frac{\partial \ln l}{\partial v}(y) = \frac{\partial \ln |v|}{\partial v}(y); \quad (6.18)$$

hence we get that

$$|v(y)| = \frac{C_\gamma}{l^2(y)} \quad (6.19)$$

along the trajectory γ for a positive constant C_γ depending on γ . Note also that equations (6.16)–(6.19) hold for any trajectory of v in G and hence by continuity in \bar{G} outside the zero locus of l ; in particular, we see that

$$v(y) \neq 0 \text{ for any } y \in \bar{G} \text{ with } l(y) \neq 0. \quad (6.20)$$

Let $z_0 \in \bar{G}$ be a point where the function $|v|$ attains its maximum on \bar{G} , then $z_0 \in \partial G$. Indeed, if it is not the case, we have

$$\frac{\partial v^1}{\partial x_3}(z_0) = 0,$$

and hence $\omega(z_0) = 0$ by (6.13) which implies $z_0 \in \partial G$.

Let γ_1 be the trajectory of v starting from $z_1 \in \partial G$ with $v(z_1) \neq 0$, then $\omega = 0$ on the whole trajectory γ_1 and $\gamma_1 \subset \partial \Omega$. Therefore $\nabla b = v \times \omega = 0$ on γ_1 , where $b = p + \frac{1}{2}|v|^2$ is the Bernoulli function (see, e.g., [AK]) and we get

$$\nabla p = -\frac{1}{2} \nabla |v|^2 \text{ on } \gamma_1. \quad (6.21)$$

Let $y \in \gamma_1$ and let e be a unit vector in Π_{13} orthogonal to $v(y)$, then $\langle v_e(y), v(y) \rangle = 0$ for $v_e = (\nabla_e v^1, \nabla_e v^3)$ by (6.13) since $\omega(y) = 0$. Therefore $\langle \nabla |v|^2(y), e \rangle = 0$ and (6.21) implies that γ_1 is a straight line interval I which is finite since v has a compact support, v vanishes at its end points and thus $l|_I = 0$ by (6.20).

Let now $z_0 = 0$ and continue to assume that x_1 is directed along $v(0) \neq 0$ and x_2 is directed along $\omega(x) \neq 0$ for some $x \in G$ (the direction of $\omega(x)$ does not depend on x), then l is a linear function on Π_{13} vanishing on the x_1 -axis: $l = Cx_3$ for $C \neq 0$. Denote now $D_\varepsilon^+ = B_\varepsilon \cap \{0 < x_3\}$ and $D_\varepsilon^- = B_\varepsilon \cap \{0 > x_3\}$, then we have $D_\varepsilon^+ \subset G$. Indeed, first note that $(D_\varepsilon^+ \cap \partial G) \cup (D_\varepsilon^- \cap \partial G) = \emptyset$ since otherwise the trajectory γ_1 starting from $z_1 \in (D_\varepsilon^+ \cap \partial G) \cup (D_\varepsilon^- \cap \partial G)$ leads to a contradiction since $l|_{\gamma_1} = 0$. Moreover, for the trajectory $\alpha_0(t)$ of $v^\perp = (-v^3, v^1)$ starting at 0 we have $\alpha_0(t) \in D_\varepsilon^+$ for a small $t > 0$ and $\alpha_0(t) \in D_\varepsilon^-$ for a small $t < 0$. Since $\omega \neq 0$ on G we get that $|v|$ strictly decreases along α_0 by (6.13) ($v(0)$ being parallel to x_1) while $\alpha_0(t)$ stays in G and since $|v|$ attains at 0 its maximum in \bar{G} we get that $D_\varepsilon^- \cap G = \emptyset$; therefore, $D_\varepsilon^+ \subset G$.

Furthermore, any trajectory γ_s of v starting from the point $(0, 0, s) \in D_\varepsilon^+$ with $0 < s < \varepsilon$ and a sufficiently small $\varepsilon > 0$ is closed. Indeed, by (6.19) we may assume that C_{γ_s} strictly increases as a function of $s \in (0, \varepsilon)$ and thus γ_s with $s \in (0, \varepsilon)$ intersects the interval $(0, (0, \varepsilon))$ only once. By the Poincaré-Bendixson theorem we get that γ_s either

- (i) tends to a limit, or
- (ii) tends to a limit cycle $\rho \subset G$, or
- (iii) is closed.

Since (i) contradicts (6.19) and (ii) implies that any trajectory γ_a with $s < a < \varepsilon$ tends to ρ which contradicts (6.19) as well, we get that (iii) holds. Moreover, any trajectory starting inside D_ε^+ enters the domain $\{x_3 > \delta\} \cap G$ for some fixed $\delta > 0$ and the union $A = \bigcup_{0 < s < \varepsilon} \gamma_s \subset G$ is a topological annulus.

Note now that C_{γ_s} tends to zero for $s \rightarrow 0$ by (6.19). Any trajectory α of v^\perp in A is orthogonal to the trajectories γ_s and thus intersects all γ_s while $|v|$ strictly decreases along α by (6.13) since $\omega^2 > 0$ on G . If $\lambda \in (0, \varepsilon)$ then

$$\inf_{\gamma_\lambda} |v| > |v(z)|$$

for a sufficiently small $s \in (0, \lambda)$ and some $z \in \gamma_s$, while the trajectory α_z of v^\perp starting from z intersects γ_λ and $|v|$ strictly decreases along α_z which gives a contradiction and thus finishes the proof.

7 Vector Analysis' Framework

Let us briefly discuss Conjectures 1.1. and 1.2 in terms of the vector analysis for compactly supported tensor fields in \mathbb{R}^3 . In this section we suppose that $v \in C_0^\infty(S^1, \mathbb{R}^3)$. We can rewrite (1.2) as follows

$$\text{curl}(\text{div}(v \otimes v)) = 0. \quad (7.1)$$

Proposition 7.1 *If (7.1) holds and the corresponding function $w \in C_0^\infty(M)$ is everywhere zero on M then*

$$\Psi = \Psi(v) =_{\text{def}} \sigma(\text{curl}(v \otimes v)) = 0 \quad (7.2)$$

for the symmetrization Ψ of the tensor field $\text{curl}(v \otimes v)$, i.e.

$$2\Psi^{ij} = \varepsilon_{ilm} \frac{\partial(v^j v^l)}{\partial x_m} + \varepsilon_{jlm} \frac{\partial(v^i v^l)}{\partial x_m},$$

where ε_{ijk} is the standard permutation (pseudo-)tensor, giving the sign of the permutation (ijk) of (123) and the summation convention applies.

Proof. For any fixed value of x_1 , we define the vector field

$$Z = v^1(v^2, v^3) = (v^1 v^2, v^1 v^3)$$

on the vertical plane $\Pi_{23}(x_1) = \{x_1, x_2, x_3\}$ with coordinates $\{x_2, x_3\}$ depending on x_1 as on a parameter.

We have then $IZ(m') = w_{\nu_m}(m) = \langle \nabla w, \nu_m \rangle$ for a line $m \subset \Pi_{23}(x_1)$, a normal ν_m to m and a line $m' \perp m \subset \Pi_{23}(x_1)$, thus $IZ = 0$ and hence the solenoidal component ${}^s Z$ equals zero, where $Z = {}^s Z + {}^p Z$ is the Helmholtz decomposition of the vector field Z . Therefore we have

$$\Psi^{11} = \text{curl } Z = \text{curl } {}^s Z = 0,$$

thus $\Psi^{ii} = 0$ for $i = 1, 2, 3$ and rotating the coordinate system in each plane $\{x_i, x_j\}$ through the angle $\frac{\pi}{4}$ we get $\Psi^{ij} = 0$ for all $1 \leq i \leq j \leq 3$.

Moreover, the proof of Theorem 6.1 shows that the conditions $\Psi(v) = 0$ and $\text{div } v = 0$ imply $v = 0$.

Therefore Conjectures 1.1 and 1.2 follow from

Conjecture 7.1. *If $\text{curl}(\text{div}(v \otimes v)) = 0$ then $\sigma(\text{curl}(v \otimes v)) = 0$.*

Another equivalent statement can be formulated as follows

Conjecture 7.2. *If $I(\text{div}(v \otimes v)) = 0$ then $PI(v \otimes v) = 0$.*

One can also ask whether the condition $\text{curl}(\text{div}(v \otimes v)) = 0$ implies that v is spherically symmetric, which would grant Conjectures 1.1, 1.2, 7.1 and 7.2.

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